

ER 88-4706X

Congressman Stephen J. Solarz

OCA FILE

*Rep*  
*Stephen Solarz*  
*DCI*

December 5, 1988

Mr. William Webster  
Director  
The Central Intelligence Agency  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Webster:

On September 1st, I assumed the position of honorary president of Sight Savers International and it is on behalf of this worthy and much-esteemed worldwide humanitarian effort that I am now taking the liberty of writing to both enlist your support and to invite you to join with me, and a select group of distinguished Americans, as a member of its board of directors. Mr. Webster, as an outstanding player in the Reagan Presidency and as an individual with a laudable personal record of public service, it is my sincere hope that you will be able to accept my invitation and lend your admirable talents, expertise and energy to this important cause -- a cause that I am certain will ultimately benefit countless thousands of people throughout the developing world and greatly enhance the quality of medical care they currently receive.

It is also my hope that you will be able to attend, as an honored guest, a gala reception and buffet supper I am hosting in honor of the new board members on Thursday evening, January 26th at 6:30 p.m. in the Mike Mansfield Gallery of the United States Capitol in Washington, DC. We anticipate that the reception will be attended by 300 leaders of the nation's business, academic, philanthropic and arts communities, as well as key representatives of the Congress, the Executive and the diplomatic corps and that our special guests of honor will be the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Senator Mark Hatfield, Senator Paul Laxalt and Senator Edward Kennedy. Gala expenses have been generously underwritten by Evian Waters of France, Inc. and there is no fund raising associated with this event. A select list of confirmed guests includes the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, the ambassadors of Great Britain, Japan, Belgium, Italy, China, Sweden, Pakistan, Iraq, Paraguay, Singapore, Peru, Nigeria, Greece, Ghana, Egypt, Turkey, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, El Salvador, Malaysia, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Algeria, the Philippines, Belize, Bhutan, Gambia, Luxembourg, Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, Togo, Mr. Marvin Hamlish, Mr. Craig Claiborne, Nobel laureate, Dr. David Hubel, Miss Kitty Carlisle Hart, Miss Roberta Peters, Miss Leona Mitchell Bush, Secretary John Gardner, Mr. Spalding Gray, Miss Gelsey Kirkland and more. Additionally, the gala will be attended by over one hundred members of the Congress including Representatives Samuel Stratton, Gene Taylor, John Murtha, Norman Mineta, Ben Blaz, Henry Waxman, Howard Wolpe, Matthew Martinez, Tom Petri, Joe Barton, Bill Clinger, Matthew

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Rinaldo, Ralph Hall, Fred Grandy and Bob Dornan. The medical community will be represented by the deans of the Albert Einstein School of Medicine, the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, the Medical College of Pennsylvania, Howard University Medical School, Syracuse University Medical School, Harvard University School of Medicine, and the Bowman Gray School of Medicine. Needless to say, your participation would add luster to our enterprise and I would be proud, indeed, to link your name with mine in common cause.

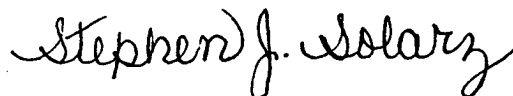
As you may know, Sight Savers International, a tax-exempt non-profit agency, was established in 1987 with a broad mandate to eradicate curable blindness by providing both superior medical treatment and professional training to care for the poor and indigent in developing nations throughout the globe. From India to Tanzania, from Peru to Indonesia, from El Salvador to Turkey, Sight Savers programs will have a resounding impact on these societies and the individuals who so needlessly suffer. The scope of its activities is extensive and ranges from providing much-needed surgery for the twenty million people who have been unnecessarily blinded from cataracts to underwriting professional institutes and literature dissemination programs for local medical personnel; from endowing and staffing local clinics and hospital operating theatres to supplying state-of-the-art medical and surgical supplies and equipment; from funding international externship programs for deserving physicians and medical students interested in pursuing careers in ophthalmology and public health to creating public education programs targeting specific populations and alerting them to available ophthalmological treatment options. In 1989, with the support of the World Health Organization, foreign ministries of health and the American private sector, Sight Savers plans to sponsor two regional conferences on new techniques in cataract surgery: the first will be held in Lagos, Nigeria and the second in Manila, the Philippines. Additionally, in cooperation with select American medical schools and teaching hospitals, this year Sight Savers will mount a major campaign to recruit qualified surgeons and physicians to staff a new entity designed to augment its in-place volunteer physician units. Drawing its inspiration from the Peace Corps and VISTA, but generating its support principally from the international business community, this project represents an innovative solution to the problem of physician shortages in developing countries. I am confident that this program will inspire many young men and women, with the skills and compassion so necessary to combat the unique conditions and health problems of the Third World, to join us in this important work.

As Chairman of the House of Representatives Sub-Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, it has been my privilege to visit many developing nations and to see first-hand the problems they confront as they struggle to elevate the quality of life for their people. Cataract blindness devastates a significant percentage of human beings -- both young and old -- in these countries. This fact is unacceptable and all the more tragic because it can be remedied by a simple twenty minute surgical procedure that costs less than \$100. I am convinced that we are morally obligated to help restore these people to full and productive lives and I am equally convinced that Sight Savers International is a viable vehicle to lead in this effort.

The famed French writer Albert Camus wrote: "Perhaps we cannot prevent this world from being a world in which children are tortured. But we can reduce the number of tortured children. And if you don't help us, who else in the world can help us do this." It is precisely this notion that compels Sight Savers International to expand the breadth of its work. But, as Camus noted, we cannot do it alone -- we need to garner the talent and resources that will truly make this effort substantial and it is for this reason that I trust you will join me on the board of directors of this dynamic international agency.

Mr. Webster, given your strong commitment to human rights and your firm support for so many public spirited causes, I sincerely hope that you will be able to accept my invitation. I have enclosed an RSVP card for your convenience. With questions, please contact my assistant, Mr. Randy Glantz, at (202) 546-4540. I look forward to receiving an early positive response and to greeting you at the Capitol on January 26th. Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen J. Solarz". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Stephen J. Solarz

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